## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01865 010906Z

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**ACTION CU-03** 

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIA-06 HEW-04 CIAE-00 INR-07

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R 311442Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1689

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: NA TAGS: OEXC, BU

SUBJECT: IREX PROGRAMS IN BULGARIA

REF: (A) STATE 214816; (B) SOFIA 1638

- 1. AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED KASSOF'S AUGUST 5 LETTER AND IS SENDING ESSENTIALLY NON-COMMITTAL REPLY.
- 2. IN THE DAYS WHEN IT WAS THE ONLY ON-GOING U.S. CULTURAL EXCHANGE ACTIVITY, IREX PROGRAMS IN BULGARIA CLEARLY WERE VERY IMPORTANT TO US. THE SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS UNDER WHICH IREX OPERATES, HOWEVER, KEEP THESE PROGRAMS AT ONLY THE "SOMETHING IS BETTER THAN NOTHING" LEVEL. IN PARTICULAR, IREX'S DETERMINATION TO STEER CLEAR OF ANYTHING THAT MIGHT RUFFLE THE FEATHERS OF EVEN THE MOST CAUTIOUS OF BULGARIAN BUREAUCRATS HAS MEANT THAT MOST IREX SCHOLARS COME TO BULGARIA TO RESEARCH SUBJECTS SUCH AS "ON DESCRIBING CLITIC ORDER IN THE BULGARIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LITERARY LANGUAGE", OR "OTTOMAN REFORM IN BULGARIA

1856-76."

3. THERE WAS A DAY, OF COURSE, WHEN RESEARCH PERFORMED BY AMERICAN SCHOLARS IN BULGARIA NEEDED TO BE SO TIGHTLY CONSTRAINED. ALTHOUGH THE FIELD NOW IS HARDLY WIDE OPEN, NEITHER DO WE HAVE TO BE QUITE SO TIMID AS THIS. YET IREX HAS NOT GROWN WITH THE TIMES. AS A RESULT, IREX SCHOLARS SEEM TO INTERACT ONLY WITH VERY SMALL GROUPS OF HIGHLY SPECIALIZED SCHOLARS.

4. WITH THE COMMENCEMENT A FEW YEARS AGO OF OUR OWN IVP AND SPECIALIST PROGRAMS, AND PARTICULARLY IF WE CAN HAVE PROGRAMS OF THE TYPE DESCRIBED IN REF B AND FORESEEN UNDER THE SHORTLY-TO-BE FINALIZED CULTURAL-SCIENTIFIC AGREEMENT, WE VIEW IREX PROGRAMS AS OF RELATIVELY LOW PRIORITY HERE. OUR PREFERENCE WOULD BE TO HAVE MORE MONEY AVAILABLE TO CU/EE AND LESS TO IREX.

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